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sing, Goethe, Schiller, Wieland, Herder, Bürger, Z. Werner, H. v. Kleist, also on H. Sachs, Moscherosch, Grimmelshausen, Shakspeare in Germany), furthermore in English literature, especially on Chaucer, and made some contributions to our knowledge of Boccaccio and Dante. His special field, however, was folklore, and his erudition in that field was almost phenomenal. Erich Schmidt once speaks of him (in the notes to his essay on 'Lenore'), as "der auf diesem Gebiete allkundige R. Köhler."

The first essay of the book, *Ueber europäische Märchen*, has been much used and quoted; so, for instance, in commentaries on Goethe's *Faust*, because of Margaret's song in the prison scene. It contains a short survey of all valuable collections of *Volksmärchen* made before the appearance of the Grimms' *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* (1812). It is remarkable to see (p. 17) how men like Wieland (in 1786) and Kotzebue (in 1791) could speak in disparaging terms of popular tales, at a time when Herder had made all progressive minds aware of the value of popular ballads and lyrics. The chief aim of the essay is, however, to show the wanderings of certain tales throughout Asia and Europe. Köhler mentions the fact that the great diversity of subjects which strikes the student of popular tales is not real, and all the stories we have are variations on a few themes. He agrees with Benfey in believing that a large number of stories came from India and spread from there, especially after the Mohamedan conquests in the East, or in a roundabout way through the Mongols. Many such stories were made familiar to the West particularly by Boccaccio and Straparola. Hence traces of old Germanic influence can be proved in comparatively few cases.—The whole theory of the spread of popular tales is finely illustrated by the wanderings of 'Der treue Johannes' (Grimm, No. 6).

The second essay, *Eingemauerte Menschen*, treats of the belief current in many parts of Germany that human beings were walled into the foundations of castles, or bridges. Köhler also quotes Servian, Armenian, Hungarian and Greek songs based on this belief, some of which are remarkable for power. In many, birds play an important part. The nightingale appears as a messenger, as it does in the popular poetry of almost all nations.<sup>3</sup>

Delicious naïveté characterizes the stories dealing with St. Peter (third essay). He is either made fun of or reminded of his own shortcomings on earth by souls wishing to enter Paradise. Stories about St. Peter were used by Bürger, Schubart, Voss, H. von Kleist, Halm. Köhler exhibits literary sense in his appreciative treatment of the popular ballads and tales he discusses in the essay entitled *Die sprechende Harfe*. Generally the idea underlies the stories, that from the bones of a murdered person a harp was made which when

played, betrayed the murderer. The Icelandic ballad (p. 85) has wonderful force. In Geibel's *Balladen vom Pagen und der Königstochter* we find the same idea in a somewhat changed form. The sly seriousness underlying many products of the popular mind delightfully comes out in the tales on good and bad luck in the fifth essay (*Von Glück und Unglück*). The belief that the lucky remain lucky even against their will and that the unlucky cannot improve their condition in spite of great efforts is especially well illustrated by some Italian and Servian tales. In the last essay (*Das Hemd des Glücklichen*), Köhler traces with admirable erudition and versatility the different forms of a wide-spread story in which a sick man, generally in high station, could be cured by the shirt of a perfectly happy person. After a long fruitless quest, a happy man is found,—but he is too poor to own a shirt. This story is found in Tunis among the people, and in modern times has been used with variations by different writers, among them Daru (of Goethe fame), Walter Scott in *The Search after Happiness or The Quest of Sultan Soliman* and by W. G. in the *Fliegende Blätter*, lxxv, 149. Köhler adds other stories which preach contentment by showing that nobody is perfectly happy. He mentions a Hindoo legend about Buddha, first published by Max Müller in 1869, a story in Lucian, one in a letter of Emperor Julian to Amerios, one in the Pseudo-Kallisthenes, one in Ser Giovanni's *Pecorone*. This last-mentioned story inspired Mrs. Eliza Haywood in *The Fruitless Enquiry or Search After Happiness* (London: 1747). The book closes with a valuable bibliography of Köhler's writings.

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## CORRESPONDENCE.

### CHAUCER IN ITALY.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES,

SIRS:—I noticed too late for insertion in my paper of your last number, that the Foreign Accounts roll printed by me is described in the Chauc. Soc. *Trial Forewords to Minor Poems*, p. 130. I quote the description in full, "1374 or 3. Exc. L. T. R. *Foreign Accounts*, 47 Ed. 3, Roll 3. C's accounts for his journeys to Genoa and Florence, from 1 Dec. 1372 to 23 May 1373." This misleading description by which the dates appear to apply to the accounts and not to the journeys—it may be a mere matter of punctuation—is responsible for the form of Professor Skeat's note (*Oxford Chaucer* i, p. xxiv, note 67).

Dr. Furnivall writes me that this roll with others is one he has long intended to print in *Life Records*. The interest of the roll, and

<sup>3</sup> Cf Böckel, *Deutsche Volkslieder aus Oberhessen*, p. lxxxviii.

its immediate bearing upon the Chaucer-Petrarch problem which I have been long studying, will justify a double publication, ordinarily unnecessary. I trust the Foreign Accounts roll for the second Italian journey may soon be printed, separately, if the *Life Records* hang fire.

In my communication to *The Nation* of Oct. 8th, I have possibly made too much of the Second Italian journey as the real beginning of Chaucers "Italian Period." I still think the theory probable—but *post hoc's* are specious. Chaucer's "Italian Period" means to me the time when Italian influence was formative in his works; at an earlier time Chaucer may have known something of Italian, certainly knew something of Italy. The growth of such an influence was, probably, gradual, but the time of its florescence into the great Italianate poems appears at once to be short and to follow closely upon the second Italian journey. This alone deserves the name "Italian Period."

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#### NOTES ON HALL'S CONCISE ANGLO-SAXON DICTIONARY.

##### ERRATA.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES,

SIRS: I wish to call attention to the following errors that appeared in my articles in the June (No. 6) and Nov. (No. 7) issues of this Journal:

Col. 327, line 13, the brackets should be closed after the interrogation point; same col., note 9, line 6, *ðufhammar* should read *ðufhamar*.

Col. 331, note 21<sup>b</sup>, line 2, for *half* read *hlaif*; for *gespring ende* read *gesprengedne*; line 3, for *halfa* read *hlafa*; line 5, for *gebegeðne* read *gebegedne*; line 7, for *gesprengende* read *gesprengedne*; for *klafa* read *hlafa*.

Col. 332, line 17, for *hylstēne* read *hylsteñe*; same col., note 23<sup>b</sup>, line 1, for *hylleshama* read *hyllehama*.

Col. 333, line 11, for *teðridtid* read *teðridtid*; line 12, for *ð* read *ð*.

Col. 333, note 25, line 5, for *t esca*, *t iscia* read *t esca*, *t iscia*.

Col. 413, line 20, read *Hall* for *Hal*.

Col. 413, note 42, read *t æfnung* for *t æfnung*.

Col. 414, line 25 read *bad* for *baed*.

Col. 414, note 44, read *WW. 479, 17*, as is correctly printed in note 46.

Col. 416, note 47, line 4, read *botriones* for *botrognes*.

Col. 417, line 9, read *t eahtho* for *t eahtho*; also lines 12 and 14, *t* should read *t*, being the abbreviation of *uel*.

Supplementary to what I have said (Col. 415) on Hall's entry *gripu* 'Kettle, caldron,' I wish to draw attention to the German dialect (Wirz-

burg) forms *krodeln*, *krödeln*, *krötteln*, denoting the boiling of sausages or sausage-meat in a particular kind of caldron. Hence the fork or hook, by means of which meat or sausages are fished out of the caldron, is called *crodal* in OHG.<sup>1</sup> In regard to the conclusion at which I have arrived on col. 418, concerning Sweet's *grundsopa* having no standing in Anglo-Saxon, I may add, that what we find *WW. 717, 36, hoc abdomen grundsopa* is very likely *hoc abdomen glundrope*, that is, *gelund rope*; cp. *WW. 150, 14 renunculi lundagan*; *WW. 159, 6 abdomen hrysel uel gelend uel swind uel swines smere*; *rope*, of course, stands in the old sense of 'bowel' and is also to be restored in *WW. 679, 9 hec colera the ersope*; that is, *ers rope*, which, in meaning, is practically identical with *hic cirbus A<sup>r</sup> harstharme*; that is, *ars tharme*, representing a German *Arschdarm*.

OTTO B. SCHLUTTER.  
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#### VERSTECKENS SPIELEN.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES,

SIRS:—Prof. Thomas in his *Practical German Grammar*, p. 200, speaks of the word *Versteckens* in the phrase, *Versteckens spielen*, as "a genitive difficult to classify." Grimm, Sanders, and Heyne offer no explanation. In Heidelberg the little children can be heard to say distinctly: "Nu, spiele wir *verstecke'ns*." This is certainly Süddeutsch for, "Nun, spielen wir *verstecken uns*;" which has been contracted into *Versteckens*, as in Kotzebue's *Kleinstädter*, iv, 7: "Geschwind noch einmal *versteckens* gespielt." Thus what appears to be a genitive is merely a verb and its object.

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#### BRIEF MENTION.

The next Annual Meeting of the Modern Language Association of America will be held at Adelbert College, Cleveland, Ohio, December 29, 30, 31. The Opening session will be convened at 3 o'clock, December 29th. The President of the Association, Professor Calvin Thomas, of Columbia University, will deliver an address on "Literature and Personality," December 29th at 8 o'clock.

Professor A. H. Tolman and Mrs. Ella Adams Moore, of the University of Chicago, have published a "Select Bibliography of the English Drama before Elizabeth," and "A Comparative Table of the Four Cycles of Religious Plays." Together, twenty-five cts. (The University of Chicago Press.) These lists and tables are carefully prepared and will be found very helpful.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Schmeller, *Bair. Wtb.* ii, 382.